

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 NEA-11 HA-05 ISO-00 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 /105 W
-----025054 051038Z /10

P R 050938Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7283
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY LONDON

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 2046

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PINS, SHUM, SU
SUBJECT: COMMUNIST POLITICAL PRISONERS RELEASED

REF: KHARTOUM 1969

1. SUDANESE MEDIA REPORT THAT FIRST VP ABUL GASSEM HAS MET WITH
QUOTE 29 REMAINING COMMUNIST DETAINEES UNQUOTE AND ORDERED THAT
THEY BE RELEASED FROM PRISON AND REINSTATED IN THEIR PREVIOUS
POSTS. HE WARNED THAT ANY INDIVIDUAL ACTIVITIES CALCULATED TO
UNDERMINE REVOLUTION WOULD CERTAINLY BE DEALT WITH IN ACCORDANCE
WITH LAW. ACCORDING SUNA WITH RELEASE OF COMMUNISTS ALL PRISONS
IN SUDAN ARE NOW RPT NOW FREE OF ANY PERSONS CONVICTED OF
POLITICAL CRIME.

2. IN OTHER RECONCILIATION DEVELOPMENTS SUNA REPORTS FATHER
PHILIP ABBAS GHABOUSH HAS SENT TAPE TO NIMEIRI SUPPORTING
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RECONCILIATION. IN RELEASING THIS INFO TO PRESS ABUL GASSEM
INVITED GHABOUSH TO RETURN TO SUDAN. SUNA REPORT INDICATES
PREPARATIONS TO WELCOME GHABOUSH BACK ARE CURRENTLY BEING
DISCUSSED. COMMENT: GHABOUSH IS NUBA MOUNTAIN PEOPLE LEADER
WHO HAS OPPOSED NIMEIRI REGIME ON RELIGIOUS GROUNDS ALLEGING
THAT IT DISCRIMINATES AGAINST CHRISTIANS. APPARENTLY HE AT
LAST CONVINCED THIS NOT RPT NOT SO, AND IS WILLING RETURN FROM

EXILE, WHICH THOUGHT TO BE IN LONDON. END COMMENT

3. IN YET ANOTHER DEVELOPMENT AYAM FRIDAY MAY 4 PRINTS INTERVIEW WITH HUSSEIN AL-HINDI IN LONDON WHO APOLOGIZES FOR QUOTE UNEXPECTED PERSONAL REASONS UNQUOTE WHICH PREVENTED HIS RETURN APRIL 30 (REFTEL). HE REAFFIRMS HIS TRUST IN NIMEIRI AND DENIES SPLIT WITH SADIQ AL-MAHDI IN FRONT PAGE INTERVIEW. ACCORDING TO THIS REPORT HINDI WILL DEFINITELY RETURN TO SUDAN IN MAY.

4. COMMENT: THUS RECONCILIATION APPEARS ALIVE AND WELL. ALTHOUGH SAME TERMS WERE OFFERED TO COMMUNISTS AT BEGINNING RECONCILIATION AS HAD BEEN EXTENDED TO OTHER OPPOSITION ELEMENTS, THEY HAD REFUSED TO ACCEPT THEM UNTIL NOW. THIS, PRESUMABLY, WAS FINE AS FAR AS SUDANGOV WAS CONCERNED. OUR FIRST REACTION IS THAT RELEASE OF COMMUNISTS AT THIS TIME RELATED TO BARGAINING OVER RETURN OF HINDI AND PROBABLY ALSO MEANT TO EASE IMPROVEMENT OF RELATPQNS WITH ETHIOPIA AND LIBYA. WE ALSO THINK NIMEIRI MAY HOPE TO SPLIT COMMUNIST OPPOSITION BETWEEN THOSE WHO ACCEPT RECONCILIATION AND THEREFORE AGREE TO WORK OPENLY AND WITHIN SYSTEM AND THOSE WHO WILL REMAIN OPPOSED AND UNDERGROUND. WE ALSO NOTE THAT ACCORDING TO OUR INFO THERE WERE MANY MORE THAN 29 COMMUNISTS IN PRISON WHICH RAISES QUESTION WHETHER JAILS ARE AS EMPTY OF COMMUNIST PRISONERS AS MEDIA CLAIM. HOPE TO HAVE ADDITIONAL INFO AND COMMENT SOON.

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